

# MDAH: Katrina Recovery

## Old Capitol Building, Collections Sustain Serious Damage

When Katrina ripped the roof off the Old Capitol and let in torrential rain, plaster walls and ceilings were damaged so severely that the Old Capitol Museum of Mississippi History was forced to close to the public. More than 3,000 artifacts were removed from the affected areas and spread throughout the building to dry and be assessed by experts. Wet fiberglass insulation in the attic compounded a growing mold problem in the building.

A temporary roof was immediately installed but could not withstand the high winds and rain of Hurricane Rita. Estimates of damage repair to the building

approach one million dollars; artifact restoration costs may exceed \$500,000. Damage to the Old Capitol building from Katrina has moved its restoration—planned to take place after a new Museum of Mississippi History was complete—to first priority. Architect Robert Parker Adams, project consultant, said the fabric of the building is endangered and in need of immediate attention.

This restoration would be the second in the history of the 1839 statehouse building. It was saved from destruction in 1917 and in 1959 was restored as the state history museum.



*Above, (l-r) Representative Rita Martinson, Representative Tom Weathersby and Senator Sampson Jackson tour the museum with MDAH director H.T. Holmes, Board of Trustees president William F. Winter, and architect Robert Parker Adams; right, dangerous areas partitioned; below right, dehumidifiers pull gallons of water a day from each room; below left, affected artifacts in the House chamber.*





# Surveys Document Damage to Historic Structures



*Staff Members Left Offices Immediately for Field Work. Above, MDAH preservationist Mingo Tingle documents damage in National Register historic districts on the coast; below, MDAH archaeologist Jack Elliott and MDAH chief archaeologist Pam Edwards recover artifacts at Beauvoir, which was severely damaged but is standing and restorable.*



*MDAH director H.T. Holmes talks with Rick Forte, Sr., chairman of the Combined Boards of Beauvoir, after surveying damage to Beauvoir and the Jefferson Davis Presidential Library.*

## Assessment Teams Gather Info

Documentation of damage from Hurricane Katrina made by MDAH may help property owners with insurance claims, tax credits, and more. Less than a week after Katrina hit, MDAH began sending teams to the Gulf Coast to assess damage to National Register-listed districts and landmarks. Teams photographed and made cursory written evaluations of the damaged structures.

For information about a particular property, send a request citing the address to Hurricane Katrina Damage Information, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, P.O. Box 571, Jackson, MS, 39205-0571.



*Above, multiple trees hit this Hattiesburg house. Surveys of National Register historic districts continue in towns including Laurel, Hattiesburg, and others.*



*"Union Quarters" is the title of the historical marker lying in front of the site of the Pass Christian house that housed Union soldiers in 1862. MDAH cast-aluminum historical markers are in evidence all along the coast—many still standing—as the last overt evidence of structures that previously occupied sites.*

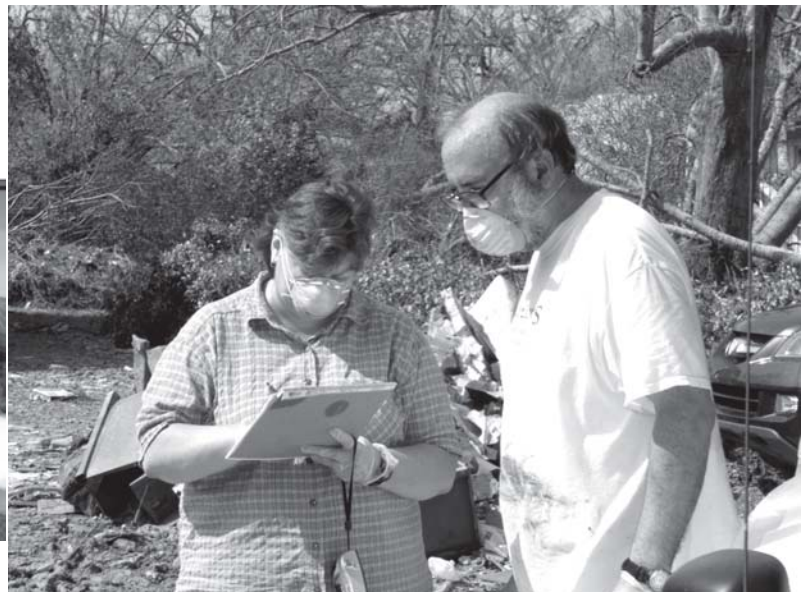




## Records, Artifacts Retrieved, Stabilized

A multidisciplinary staff team, created with the assistance of Governor Barbour and his staff, traveled to Beauvoir on Labor Day to retrieve the presidential library archives, which had not been damaged, and paintings from the house. Winterthur staff have generously offered help to Beauvoir. MDAH teams continue to travel to sites on the Gulf Coast, leaving early in the morning and returning late at night to perform damage assessments on records collections in courthouses, city halls, historic properties, and libraries. City Council minutes and ordinances for the towns of Waveland and Bay St. Louis were retrieved by the Local Government Records office and are in freezer storage in Jackson awaiting restoration.

*Left (from top), Bill Hanna, director, Local Government Records Office, retrieves damaged records from Waveland; a book of records from Bay St. Louis; Alanna Patrick, director of Paper Archives, MDAH, prepares Bay St. Louis records for freezing; Mary Lynne Ritzenthaler and Hillary Kaplan from the National Archives and Records Administration conducted a mold workshop in the Winter Building on September 29; below right, MDAH Special Projects officer Forrest Galey and MDAH director H.T. Holmes survey the damage in Bay St. Louis; top right, the Biloxi Public Library*







***Top right,** MDAH historian Grady Howell surveys the damage to Beauvoir; **top left,** (l-r) Christine Wiseman and Ann Frellson, an assessment team from the Georgia Archives, with Jeff Rogers, MDAH graphic records curator, and Marian Wingo, Ocean Springs EOC, at Ocean Springs City Hall after a day of reviewing collections in coast repositories; **left,** Elaine Owens, MDAH coordinator for salvage operations, recovers items at Old Spanish Fort in Pascagoula; **below,** MDAH Audio-visual curator Preston Everett removes mold-covered artifacts for cleaning and drying from the Old Spanish Fort.*

